The Salvation of Jemmy Slang

By

Robert J. Fry

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In the preparation of this play, the author has been conscious that he is entering a portion of the field of writing that seems to have been avoided by others who are, doubtless, older and wiser than he. He feels, however, that there is need of such an endeavor, and if this attempt should encourage some one to write in this field, he will feel grateful that it has accomplished a part of its mission.

Perhaps it may seem to some that the author has been very lax in the matter of stage direction, he having designated very few of the points of entrance, exit or walks. This has been done purposely. Too often over attention to the technic of a play kills its spirit. The author believes that it will make very little difference whether Jemmy Slang exits at the right, at the left, or through the window if the student playing the part has really created Jemmy Slang. Likewise, he believes that the ingenuity of any group of students and teachers is quite sufficient to meet these needs.

In closing it is the author's wish that this little play may be seen to border on allegory enough to set forth good English, slang and ignorance in their proper relations. If it does this, its rendition will have value beyond that of merely having acted a play.

ROBERT J. FRY.

The Salvation of Jemmy Slang

A Comedy in Two Acts

ROBERT J. FRY,

The Lewis and Clark High School,

Spokane, Washington.

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DEDICATED

in grateful acknowledgement to my Sophomore English Class of

The Lewis and Clark High School,

who made this work possible.

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Characters in the Play

Mr. Best English.

Miss Culture—later Mrs. Best English.

Miss Better English
Miss Good English
} daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Best English.

Mr. Ignorance, alias Mr. Iggy Slang.

Sal Shiftless—later Mrs. Iggy Slang.

"Ma" Shiftless.

Jemmy Slang—son of Mr. and Mrs. Ignorance, alias Slang.

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ACT FIRST

Scene One

Scene—

Drawing room of Miss Culture's home. Mr. Ignorance, dressed as a butler, dusting furniture.

Mr. Ignorance—

After all the shaggin' I've done around this here town, I'll be chased clean half way around the block if I aint got the swellest job I seen yet! Gosh a' mighty, it's swell to be a butler for a bunch of highbrows—(Pause)—Here's hopin' I don't get bumped before the week is up. If I do, my gal, Sal Shiftless, will sure be sore. If I get fired here, I'm sure enough goin' to get canned there! But Sal's an easy goin' kid—Maybe I'd get by all right. (Looking around the room) Some of these here swells sure got queer ideas about runnin' a house! Servin' them there finger bowls after they had ate their dinner! Gee, at home we always washed our hands before we come to the table! Heck! Sometimes I wish I was back at "The Dainty" hashin' out hamburgers! (looks out of door at left) Here comes that dame, Miss Culture. Whenever I see that jane, my knees tremble and I aint myself at all. I don't know why it is, neither—my family was never afraid of nuthin' before. I'll have to brace up—I will, too, or my name aint Ignorance. [Resumes his work.]

[Enter from the left, Miss Culture.]

Miss Culture—

James!

Mr. Ignorance—

Uh huh!

Miss Culture (surprised)—

James, never speak that way when I address you. Always reply, "Yes, Miss Culture."

Mr. Ignorance—

Ya, I'll do it next time.

Miss Culture—

James, I am expecting a caller this morning, Mr. Best English. I trust you remember the instructions I gave yesterday. Are you sure you can receive him and bring him to this room as I told you?

Mr. Ignorance—

Yes, Miss Culture, I aint a goin' to make no more mistakes.

[door bell rings]

Miss Culture—

That is probably he now.

[exist Mr. Ignorance, left]

O, I do hope he does it well.

[re-enter Mr. Ignorance followed by Mr. Best English]

Mr. Ignorance—

[marching down center stage, announcing]

A swell gent come to see you, Miss Culture.

Miss Culture—

That will do James. [James still stands there until Miss Culture motions him to leave, then exits, right]

[To Mr. Best English] Oh, I'm so mortified!

Mr. Best English (consolingly)—

There, there, never mind. We can't always be responsible for what our servants may do—especially new ones.

Miss Culture—

But the disappointment! I thought I was getting a jewel. He had such flattering letters of recommendation. I can not imagine how he ever secured them.

Mr. Best English—

By whom were they written?

[they are seated]

Miss Culture—

One was signed by a Mr. Fraud and the other by a Mrs. Careless.

Mr. Best English—

Do you know who those people are?

Miss Culture—

No, I have never known either of them.

Mr. Best English—

I believe the letters are forgeries. [rising] If I am not mistaken, I have seen this butler of yours before. Do you remember having heard of the time that an attempt was made to burn Doctor Dictionary's house?

Miss Culture—

Oh, yes.

Mr. Best English—

I feel very sure that this fellow's father was at that time accused of the crime. The evidence was strongly against him; but he was tried before the court of public opinion, with whom Doctor Dictionary seemed to be somewhat unpopular at that time, and he escaped punishment.

Miss Culture [rising]

Mr. Best English, you don't mean to tell me that grand old man, Doctor Dictionary, ever did anything to make him deserve unpopularity! I can not imagine such a thing—it seems absurd! He has proved the best of friends to every one who has ever sought his help. Tell me, how did this ever happen?

Mr. Best English—

Well, I can scarcely understand the conditions of those times myself. It was many, many years ago, you see, but I have heard my grandfather tell that once there was a time when our family

was very little known, and yours, I believe, was not yet heard of. Doctor Dictionary's father was a friend of my grandfather, and really was responsible for the start of our family into prominence. He helped, at that time, to establish the high principles for which our family is noted, and rendered the valuable service that dear old Doctor Dictionary has, since him, continued to both of us; and you know what a debt of gratitude we owe him. As I told you, I never have been able to understand the unpopularity that attended this noble work during that dark period. It seems that whenever one lives to a high principle, there is an opposition that seems to be personified by the very ones who will, finally, reap the greatest benefits from it.

Miss Culture—

But those times have now passed forever. How glad we are to live in these times! Ever since I can remember our families have been respected for the principles for which they live. Like you, I can not understand how any one could ever have opposed such principles and have had the approval of any man, woman or child. One of my earliest recollections is that of a very little boy stopping my father one day, when he and I were out walking, and saying to him, "Mr. Culture, when I grow up, I'm going to be like you."

Mr. Best English—

Yes, and now people all over the country seem to be nearly as happy as we since the announcement has been made of our approaching marriage. For my part, I know that it is destiny that has brought the time when, at last, the two great families of Culture and Best English shall be united, never again to part, and shall join together in working out those great principles for which they have each labored for generations.

Miss Culture—

It seems like a dream, the struggles that are past, and the happiness that is before. Last evening, as I sat alone, thinking, my mind drifted into these channels and I went to the piano. Somehow my fingers followed my thoughts and then words shaped themselves to the music. When I had finished, I found the expression of my mood in a song. Shall I sing it for you?

Mr. Best English—

Please do. It is right that such a time as this should find expression in song.

[Miss Culture goes to piano and sings]

SONG

Breaks the day o'er the edge of the ocean,
And with it our dreams quickly fly;
But their sweetness and grace,
We still would embrace,
And we'll smile as we whisper "Good-bye."

Chorus

The white ship of dreams soon shall bear us
Back to the land whence we came;
We shall leave with regret
The land where we met,
But we'll smile as we whisper its name.

Chorus

Dreams must end, and day must come again,
Hearts must find a joy for ev'ry pain;
In our hearts a sweet refrain
Lingers from our dreams—our love dreams.
Then, when twilight steals across the sea,
In my dreams again you'll come to me,
Singing love's sweet melody—
In my world of dreams.

—CURTAIN—

The words and music for the song used in this scene can be secured for twenty-five cents per copy from Robert J. Fry, The Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane, Washington.

SCENE TWO

Scene—

The shabbily furnished front room of the Shiftless home. Sal Shiftless dressed in poorly fitting clothes of colors that do not go well together, is sitting by the table. She rises and goes to the window. Looks out.

Sal Shiftless—

Can ya beat it? Here I've been waitin' half a hour for that guy, Ig. I don't see how he can expect me to stick around here countin' my fingers, waitin' for him to show up. Gosh durn it all, anyway, I wish I'd of took Mr. Nobody's invitation and gone to that swell dance tonight. They charge a nickel a dance and the orchestra plays the swellest jazz ya ever shook yer foot to. Listen! Here he comes. No, 'taint neither. Yes, 'tis, too. [hears knock. Goes to door. Enter Mr. Ignorance]

Mr. Ignorance—

Hello, kid.

Sal Shiftless—

Hello, Iggy, ole dear. How be ya? Why, what's the matter?

Mr. Ignorance—

Canned!

Sal Shiftless—

What?

Mr. Ignorance—

Ya heard me.

Sal Shiftless—

Oh, Iggy. Ya told me it was such a swell job!

Mr. Ignorance—

Swell nuthing'. Say, listen, kid, I'd rather dig ditches than work for them puffed up idiots. Why, they don't know nuthin'.

Sal Shiftless—

Why, I thought they was one of the best families in the country.

Mr. Ignorance—

Best nuthin'. Say, listen, when I get as rich as them, I'll pass them up like a pay-train does a tramp.

Sal Shiftless [laughing]—

You know how that is!

Mr. Ignorance [embarrassed]—

Well, I've heard somebody say that. [discouraged] Aw, gee, kid, I'm a gonna git outa here. I didn't do nuthin' to get canned. I know who's to blame—an' I'll get even with him some day—you see if I don't.

Sal Shiftless—

Who do you mean?

Mr. Ignorance—

I mean that guy, Best English, that thinks he is so smart. Him and me'll mix some day. You see if we don't.

Sal Shiftless—

How's he to blame?

Mr. Ignorance—

Aw, he looked at me when he come in as much as to say, "You poor simp, what you doin' here?" Then Miss Culture sent me outa the room so her an' him could talk about me. It took him a long time to get her to fire me, at that, 'cause he was there pretty near two hours.

Sal Shiftless—

And was they talkin' about you all that time, Iggy?

Mr. Ignorance [proudly]—

Sure they was! I looked in through the keyhole an' he was talkin' to her an' lookin' right at the door I was list'nin' through. Then I I listened, and heard him mention old Doc. Dictionary's name. There's another gink that never liked me, neither. But there aint no love lost there. I never could stand for that old dry bones!

Sal Shiftless—

But if Doc. Dictionary is against ya, ya can't never amount to nuthin' in this man's country.

Mr. Ignorance—

I know it. Them guys have got the coin an' they've got the country by the heels. I dunno what to do.

Sal Shilftles—

Why don't ya get outa here, Iggy?

Mr. Ignorance—

Where'd I go?—an' what'd I do when I got there? Them guys

have got influence every place.

Sal Shiftless—

Then why don't ya try and make up to 'em? Kid 'em along an' get the coin, an' then ya can be independent of 'em.

Mr. Ignorance—

They've got me spotted now. Its no use.

Sal Shiftless—

I'll tell ya what to do—change yer name.

Mr. Ignorance—

Aw, gee, if I'd kept my job I was goin' ter ask ya ter change yourn.

Sal Shiftless [sentimentally]—

Oh, Iggy, this is so sudden!

[enter Ma Shiftless]

Ma Shiftless—

Well, what's this, I'd like to know!

Sal Shiftless—

Oh, Ma, don't!

Ma Shiftless [to Iggy]—

Aint I told you I didn't want ya hangin' 'round my Sal?

Sal Shiftless—

But, Ma, he had a good job all last week!

Ma Shiftless—

What's he doin' NOW?

Sal Shiftless—

Well, it aint his fault. That Mr. Best English and old Doc. Dictionary—

Mr. Ignorance—

Yes! They was to blame fur the hull thing—they don't want to give a feller a chance.

Ma Shiftless—

Well, I'll give you a chance to get outa here. You keep hangin' 'round my Sal and first thing ya know you'll have us in bad, too.

Sal Shiftless—

But, Ma, he proposed to me.

Ma Shiftless—

Him!

Mr. Ignorance [desperately]—

Yes, I done it.

Ma Shiftless—

What 'ud ya keep her with? Goodness knows I'VE got more'n I can do now to keep her in the style she's been used to. I aint a gonna take no more to feed.

Sal Shiftless—

We aint askin' you to. We got a plan.

Mr. Ignorance [helplessly]—
Sure, we got a plan.

Ma Shiftless—
Well, I wish ya joy on it! [going to door] For my part—I'm done with ye! [exit Ma Shiftless]

Mr. Ignorance [in despair]—
Now we're up against it!

Sal Shiftless—
No we aint. We're goin' away and change our names, an' you're goin' to work an' get the coin.

Mr. Ignorance—
What will our names be?

Sal Shiftless [after stopping a moment to think]—
I remember a man that called on Doc. Dictionary once and they thought for awhile he would make a good impression. Doc. considered him for awhile, they said, but he made a fool of himself someway or other, and Doc. kicked him out. He has, probably, forgotten him by now, because he left these parts and never came back. Let's take his name.

Mr. Ignorance—
What was his name?

Sal Shiftless—
Slang—Mr. Slang.

Mr. Ignorance—
Fine Sal! Gee, you'll make a great wife! You can write your name on your calling cards—when we get rich enough to buy 'em. It'll be great—Sal Shiftless Slang!

Sal Shiftless—
And yours? Oh, I know! We'll have it written on our tombstones, like this: Here lies Sal Shiftless Slang, dearly beloved wife of, of—Iggy Slang. That's what I'm going to call you—Iggy Slang. [they join hands and execute a clumsy dance, exclaiming together as they dance off stage]
O, we'll show the world what Slang can do! We'll show 'em. Slang! Slang! Slang!

—CURTAIN—

ACT SECOND

[*Twenty Years Later*]

Scene One

Scene—
Home of Mr. and Mrs. Iggy Slang. Sal Slang and Ma Shiftless, dressed gaudily [not ridiculous]. Furniture of the room arranged in bad taste.

Ma Shiftless—
Well, Sal, when do you suppose that fool, Ig, is ever goin' to make good on his promises?

Sal Slang—

Aw, now, Ma, what d'ye think? Ig can't do everything in a day!

Ma Shiftless—

A day! Say, Sal, d'ye realize ye've been married to that feller twenty years now—and what's he done for us—what HAS he done? Answer me that! Now, if yer father, Pa Shiftless, had staid with us——

Sal Slang—

Listen, Ma, why do you always ring Dad in? It's been ten year now since he went fishin' one day and forgot to come back. An' you know that Iggy took ya in then—YOU who hadn't spoke to us for ten years before that—an' he's kep' ya an' bought ya clothes—better'n ya ever had before——

Ma Shiftless—

I aint talkin' about myself, an' besides, if I was, Ig aint got nuthin' to brag about in them quarters neither. If yer pa had staid with us until them shares he bought in that gold mine made money, he'd 'a bought more dresses in a day than that good-for-nothin' Ig will ever buy in a year. Ig's always talkin' about glad rags—but all he does is talk. An' when we get 'em they don't do us no good. When's he goin' to put us in society, like he said he was? I'm gettin' to an age when I want some of my society life here—I don't want to wait 'till I get to heaven for all of it.

Sal Slang—

Ma, you don't give Ig credit for nuthin'. Besides keepin' us an' feedin' us an' buyin' clothes for us, he has had to keep dishin' out change for Jemmy until it seems as though he never will get a chance to get his nose off the grindstone.

Ma Shiftless—

Yes, an' there's another one! I don't see why you ever called him Jemmy! You should 'a named him Ig the Second, 'cause he's just like his Dad—never does nothin but talk, outside 'a that jest good for nuthin'. He'll never get no further in society than Ig has. Here he comes now.

[enter Jemmy Slang]

Jemmy Slang—

Hello, mammy. Well, gummer, how they hittin' today? On all four? By jove, mammy, sometimes I think gummer's got more pep than all the rest of us put together. What was that yarn she was spinnin' to you when I come in?

Sal Slang—

O, the same old stuff—complainin' all the time. Wants to get into society! Lor' what a swath she'd cut!

Jemmy Slang—

She'd be some figger at that! Gummer, your idea's fine, it's just your long residence in these parts that's against you. Society always takes up with the new ones and young ones——

Ma Shiftless [sarcastically]—
You, for instance——

Jemmy Slang—
Betcher life! I got a date tonight with the swellest little jane in this town—a regular good little pal—a humdinger—a peach!

Sal Slang—
Who is this new flame, Jemmy?

Jemmy Slang—
Honest, Ma, she's a winner. I'll make her one of the Slang family yet—you just watch my smoke!

Sal Slang—
But who is she?

Jemmy Slang—
O, come on now, get yer brakes set so ya won't skid an' I'll tell ya. Are you all setting pretty now? Shall I shoot?

Sal Slang—
Come on!

Jemmy Slang—
Well, then, this classy little chicken, that has driven me clean bugs, is no other than the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Best English. Ladies, [with an elaborate bow] I hereby announce to you my latest acquisition, Miss Good English!

Ma Shiftless—
O, Jemmy, I know, now, you have the Shiftless blood in yer veins! Yer father, Ig, has been trying fer twenty years to get in with them folks an' here you do it without half trying. Jemmy, I'm proud of ya! Yer a real Shiftless!

Sal Slang—
When are ya goin' to bring her here so we can see her?

Jemmy Slang [looks around then appears to lose all his enthusiasm]—
O, sometime—[pause]—maybe.

Sal Slang [alarmed]—
Sometime? Maybe? Jemmy Slang, what d'ye mean? Ya don't mean to tell me ye're ashamed of yer father an' mother that have brought ye up an' worked so hard for ya, do ya?

Jemmy Slang—
Well, now, Mommer, let's cut the comedy. It aint exactly that—but, but—[discouraged] O, what's the use! [Leaving] See you in church, ladies! [Exit Jemmy Slang]

Ma Shiftless—
That's what he always says, "See you in church." What does he mean?

Sal Shiftless—
Don't you know, Ma? Can't you see? He's ashamed of us! He's ashamed to let his swell friends know where he lives!

Ma Shiftless—

Does he want 'em to think he lives in a church?

Sal Slang [crying]—

No, Ma, can't you see? He's ashamed of us! Our own boy, Jemmy, ashamed of his folks!

[Sal and Ma cry on each other's shoulders]

—CURTAIN—

SCENE TWO

Scene—

Parlor of the Best English home. Miss Good English and her sister, Miss Better English, in conversation.

Better English—

Good, I've something that I have wanted to say to you for a long time, but each time I have approached the subject, you have taken what I said amiss. Now I am your older sister, and I feel that I have a right to speak to you about things that are to your interest—and more especially when these things concern, as they do in this case, the honor of our whole family.

Good English—

Of course, you have, sister dear, but I did not think that I was such an important factor in our family that every move I made should be viewed with a searchlight, to test whether or not the family honor would be tainted.

Better English—

Again you either mistake or pervert my real intention in this matter.

Good English—

Then, sister dear, please tell me how you wish me to act and I shall endeavor to please you, if it is within my power. Only please don't be too serious and stern with me. You know I never could stand that. I like life, gaiety, movement. That is why I like to go to parties and dances oftener than you. You always were slow to take up with the things that attracted me.

Better English—

Good, that is just the point of what what I had to say. Don't you think that it is, to say the least, a little indiscreet to take up with people and functions so quickly, and especially when they seem to have no one to sponsor them or to recommend them?

Good English—

But, Betty dear, I just go with the other young people of my age and attend the functions they attend.

Better English—

True, Good, you do the greater part of the time; but during the past few weeks I have noted efforts on the part of certain people to gain the attention of many of your friends. Most of them, I am pleased to say, have held to the custom that, if any of these wished their company, they should come to them in the way prescribed by

society for proper entrance into it, and should prove that they are able to meet the standards to which we live.

Good English—

O, Betty, you are old-fashioned. Don't you suppose I know a lady or a gentleman when I see one? This talk of yours sounds like a hundred years ago, when a stranger was an object of superstition, and was held under suspicion, unless you knew some one who knew his people for a generation or two back of him.

Better English—

No, it is not superstition, or that I suspect these people are bad; only I feel that we should know something more of them than we do at present before we make them our friends.

Good English—

Well, I have an engagement this evening with one of these young men who is under your suspicion. I like his company and my observations of his actions at parties where I have seen him make me feel that he is a perfectly proper escort for me tonight.

Better English—

But do you not think that it would be just as well to ask father to look him up in the meantime? Not that I am expecting to find anything bad of him; in fact, I hope that everything that is found will be to his advantage, and will bear out your good opinion of him.

Good English—

O, you are perfectly welcome to look as far as you like. I am sure the young gentleman will welcome the investigation.

Better English—

What is the young gentleman's name?

Good English—

Mr. Jemmy Slang.

Better English—

Slang——? Where have I heard that name before? It seems that I have heard it, but the memory is very faint. I am sure they are a family who have never before been friends of the English family.

Good English—

And I am equally sure that we shall find them a valuable addition to our social life.

Better English—

Well, we shall see.

—CURTAIN—

SCENE THREE

[*Two weeks later.*]

Scene—

Mr. Best English seated at desk in his office. Good English seated on the arm of his chair.

Mr. Best English—

Is this the afternoon the young man was to come to see me?

Good English—

Yes, he is due here soon. Father dear, you have had him under consideration for two weeks now and you haven't given me a hint as to what you think of him.

Mr. Best English—

My dear, I have been placed in a peculiar position as a result of my investigation. From all that I can learn, the young gentleman is good-hearted, generous and entirely likeable.

Good English—

I knew that you would find him to possess all of those fine qualities.

Mr. Best English—

But there are things about him—evidently inherited from a family—concerning whom whom my attention has been called to many questionable things.

Good English—

But surely you do not hold Mr. Jemmy Slang responsible for the history of his family. If HE is noble and fine, he ought not be deprived of the privilege of nice associations, because of things over which he has no control.

Mr. Best English—

You are right, Good, to a degree. The question that confronts me is, whether or not he is aware of the things I refer to, and whether he approved of them secretly, and has acquired a veneer of apparently acceptable qualities that serves only as a mask to hide a nature similar to his father's and his mother's. In order to make a little test of these things, I have requested that he bring his father and mother here with him this afternoon. I hear footsteps in the hall now. Will you please step in here during the interview? I may call you later.

Good English—

Very well, father. I feel sure that your judgment will be confirmed as to Mr. Jemmy Slang's worthiness.

[Exit Good]

[Enter Jemmy Slang, Sal Slang, Iggy Slang. Iggy Slang wears a mask over his eyes.]

Mr. Best English [rising, extends his hand to Jemmy Slang. He does not offer to shake hands with Iggy or Sal Slang, who remain near the door.]

How do you do, Mr. Slang.

Jemmy Slang—

Good afternoon, Mr. Best English.

Mr. Best English [nods to Iggy and Sal Slang. They mumble "Howdy"] Mr. Slang, I sent for you and asked you to bring your parents this afternoon to help you to clear up certain things that concern your welfare both now and in the future. In the first place, let me make it clear that my purpose is, now, as it has always been, to extend

my help and friendship to any young man who shows a desire to improve himself, and proves sincere in his efforts. I have come to believe that you possess several commendable qualities, and I hope that you may soon be freed from some apparent defects. Mr. Slang, I have taken the liberty to examine the record of your family. Do you mind, now, if I ask a few questions of your mother before I proceed further?

Jemmy Slang—

No, sir. I'm sure my mother will be willing to answer them as fast as you can shoot them.

Mr. Best English—

Then, Mrs. Slang, will you please tell me, does Jemmy seem entirely contented at home?

Sal Slang [coming forward]

Lor', Mr. Best English, he aint home enough to give a chance ter find out! He jest comes in an' argues with us an' leaves again.

Mr. Best English—

Doesn't he ever bring any of his friends home with him?

Sal Slang—

No, Mr. Best English. He used ter until he got to chasin' around with a bunch of high-brows and swells [choking] but sence then—well, sence then—[bursting into tears]—he acts ashamed of us—[hysterically]—that's what he does—ashamed of us!

Mr. Best English [thoughtfully]—

I see.

Jemmy Slang—

Now, Mommer, don't cry. It aint that, but—but—[in despair]—Aw, gee, Mr. Best English, don't you see that I'm in a deuce of a fix—an' that I'm doin' the best I can—an' that I can't amount to anything an' chase around with the people they go with—an' when I try to be somebody an' go with better folks, they get sore at me because I don't take them along—an'—an' [trying to control himself] Oh, what's the use, Mr. Best English! [Crying] I can't never cut the mustard with a home like I've got!

Mr. Best English [kindly]—

Jemmy, I'm glad you see your problem. Do you know who your father really is?

Jemmy Slang—

Only that he is my father.

Mr. Best English—

Mr. Iggy Slang, why did you come here with a mask over your eyes this afternoon?

Iggy Slang—

Sore eyes.

Jemmy Slang [fiercely]—

It's a lie! He never wore it before. He just wanted to embarass me!

Mr. Best English—

Jemmy, I have looked up the record of the Slang family, and I find that there originally was never any such family. The records clearly show that the name Slang is merely a cover for another name that I shall speak presently. Jemmy, tear that mask from your father's face!

[Jemmy crosses to Iggy Slang and snatches the mask from his eyes.] There, Mr. Ignorance, you have been hidden quite awhile, but you are unmasked at last. Confess now, sir, have you not used the name Slang to cover your real identity—Ignorance?

Iggy Slang—

Come on, Sal. This aint no place for decent people like us. Let's get out where the air's fit to breathe!

[Exit Iggy and Sal Slang]

Jemmy Slang [after a pause during which he tries to get control of himself.]

O, Mr. Best English! What can I do? How can I thank you? I always, somehow, felt that Slang wasn't the whole thing—but I never knew my father was ignorance! Do you think there is any hope for me?

Mr. Best English—

My boy, I told you that I am the friend of all young men who sincerely desire to improve. [Calls] Good!

Good English [enters]

Yes, father.

Mr. Best English [continuing to Jemmy Slang]

To re-assure you of that, I am going to permit my daughter, Miss Good English, to take you over and introduce you to our old friend and family physician, Doctor Dictionary, and she and he will help you. I know your efforts will be crowned with success, for Doctor Dictionary has helped many a young man to acquire his rightful standing in the world. [Extending his hand to Jemmy.] Good-bye, my boy. May success attend your efforts. Come and see me often.

[Exit Good English and Jemmy Slang.]

[Mr. Best English comes forward and speaks.]

EPILOGUE.

Now, hath time the hour unfurled,
When, more clearly, we can see,
That the men who rule the world,
Shall of one great family be.

There shall be no fool or clown,
Who may gather aught of weal;
He who strives to high renown,
Shall bear on the high ideal.

—CURTAIN—

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